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SHAW

The D.A. had no doubt about the increasingly bizarre case

LOUISIANA

Bourbon Chaser

Four months had elapsed since big Jim Garrison's now notorious investigation began. And it had been weeks since, by his own claim, the New Orleans District Attorney had "solved" the crime of the century.

By seeming to lend the first "authoritative" sanction to the widespread belief that a conspiracy was involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy — thus contradicting the official conclusion of the Warren Commission — Garrison's private investigation had stirred a whirlwind of international interest and concern.

A handsome walnut sign, with huge bronze letters spelling — "JIM GARRISON" — went up over the long anonymous entrance to the District Attorney's courthouse suite. It was ready when the cavernous corridors of the grimy old criminal courts building suddenly came alive with reporters from all over the world — including Norway, Japan, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia.

'The First Arrest'

But while the world's press bided its time with increasing irritation, neither promised arrests nor a shadow of evidence had been forthcoming from Garrison's office.

Finally, under pressure, the District Attorney made an announcement. At a tumultuous news conference

ten days ago, in the echoing marble corridor outside his office, Garrison's chief investigator, William Gurvich, read this statement:

"The first arrest has been made in the investigation of the New Orleans District Attorney's office into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Arrested this evening in the District Attorney's office was Clay Shaw, age 54, of 1313 Dauphine street, New Orleans, La. Mr. Shaw will be charged with participation in a conspiracy to murder John F. Kennedy.

"It should be pointed out, however, that the nature of this case is not conducive to an immediate succession of arrests at this time. However, other arrests will be made at a later date."

In Handcuffs

About 2½ hours after the announcement, Shaw, a dapper, silver-haired six-footer, was brought out in handcuffs and driven two blocks from the courthouse to the central lockup for processing. There he was booked and District Judge Thomas Brahney — in one more odd episode in an increasingly bizarre case — set bond.

Although Garrison had requested a bond of \$25,000, and though Shaw stood accused of conspiring to murder a United States President, the judge called the amount "excessive" and released him on \$10,000 bail.

Actually, the fact was that Shaw had not been charged at all — since technically, under Louisiana law, being booked was not tantamount to being formally charged.

When pressed, Gurvich explained that Shaw "will be charged with participating in a conspiracy to murder John F. Kennedy." But he couldn't say when the formal charge would be filed. "Special cases," Gurvich explained, "take special handling."

If his allegations were true, there was no doubt that, in Shaw, Garrison had bagged a big fish. The suspect was a distinguished and wealthy New Orleans businessman, the retired managing director of the New Orleans International Trade Mart, a decorated U.S. Army major in World War II.

For 18 years, he had headed the Trade Mart, a privately supported, non-profit organization formed to promote commerce through the port of New Orleans.

During World War II, he was awarded the French Croix de Guerre and the U.S. Legion of Merit and Bronze Star; he was also a Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Belgium. France gave him the distinction of "Chevalier de L'Ordre du Merite Commercial."

And at a ceremony marking his retirement in 1965, Shaw had been presented a plaque of the International Order of Merit of the City of New Orleans.

"I am shocked and dismayed at the charges which have been filed against me," Shaw declared. "I have not conspired with anyone, at any place, to murder our late and esteemed President, John F. Kennedy, or anyone else. I do not know Lee Harvey Oswald nor to the best of my knowledge know anyone who knew him."

'I Have No Doubt'

One day after Shaw's arrest, Garrison's office let it be known that it possessed an affidavit, containing information supplied by "an informant," which alleged that Oswald and Shaw had plotted the "means and manner" of assassinating President Kennedy in the apartment of David W. Ferrie — a known New Orleans homosexual who died under controversial circumstances on February 22 after having accused Garrison of conducting a "witch-hunt."

The affidavit cleared the way for a warrant to search Shaw's luxurious residence in the French Quarter, in which Garrison's investigators found: a rope, chains, whips, a leather strap, a black hood and cape and other paraphernalia.

Shaw was Garrison's sole arrest by the middle of last week; but he was only one of four men subpoenaed. Also called in for questioning and released were: James Lewallen, a 38-year-old bachelor, an employee of Boeing's Michoud missile facility, and a former roommate of David Ferrie; Dante Marachini, a 42-year-old "painting and specifications" man at the Michoud plant; and Dean Andrews, a part-time assistant district attorney in suburban Jefferson Parish.

"There will be more arrests," Garrison again promised panting newsmen. "I have no doubt about the case. If you want to bet against me, you will lose."

Nonetheless, a number of other law enforcement agents were betting against Garrison. In Washington, the new Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, said an FBI investigation in late 1963 had cleared Shaw of any part in the assassination. "On the evidence that the FBI has," said Clark, "there was no connection found."

Old Ground?

In Lubbock, Texas, R. E. Denson of Dallas, who headed an intensive investigation for the defense of the late Jack Ruby, convicted killer of Oswald, said he had been unable to uncover any conspiracy in New Orleans.

Meantime, Warren Commission sources told The Chronicle they were still convinced that Garrison was

plowing mainly over old ground — but with a sinister new twist. What amazed — and alarmed — them were the sources upon whom the District Attorney was apparently relying.

Junkies and Fanatics

"Any case of this magnitude," a Commission attorney noted, "is bound to attract its share of characters who are less concerned with evidence than with their ability to exploit it. We encountered junkies, drunks, perverts, publicity seekers, tipsters, rumor mongers, political and religious fanatics and outright lunatics.

"The Kennedy assassination case had a vastly disproportionate share of them — and it is incumbent upon any responsible prosecutor to maintain at least a modicum of skepticism about some of those witnesses."

Two of Garrison's key witnesses — the man who linked Oswald with Ferrie, and the man who linked Oswald with Shaw — inspired a skepticism that was particularly intense among the FBI, the Secret Service and the Commission.

'Soldier of Fortune'

The first was Jack S. Martin, the man who linked Oswald with Ferrie. Martin told Garrison that Ferrie knew Oswald, that he trained him in the use of rifles with telescopic sights, and that Ferrie went to Dallas just before the assassination.

A native of Phoenix, Ariz., also known as Edward Stewart Suggs, Colonel Marten and Bishop Martin (of the orthodox old Catholic Church of North American — an affiliation he shared with Ferrie), Martin described himself as an "author, soldier of fortune and philosopher."

He told the Secret Service a bewildering welter of stories: That Ferrie hypnotized Oswald and sent him to Dallas under a spell; that Ferrie was waiting for Oswald in Dallas with a getaway plane on Nov. 22, 1963; that Ferrie and Oswald were under the influence of Guy Bannister, a former FBI agent, later deputy chief of the New Orleans police force and a private investigator until his death in 1964.

The Commission ultimately accepted the Secret Service's conclusion that Martin,

though an eager informer, had "all the appearance of an alcoholic" with a reputation for giving authorities false information based solely on his "imagination."

Wild Argot

But an even more intriguing figure than Martin was the man who linked Shaw with Oswald — Dean Andrews. It apparently was Mark Lane ("Rush to Judgment") who piqued Garrison's interest in Andrews.

A garrulous local lawyer, Andrews told the FBI that on November 23, 1963, a lawyer named Clay Bertrand — who handled the cases of "gay kids" — had asked him to represent Oswald in Dallas. Instead of tracking down that important lead, Lane charged, the FBI had "sought to convince Andrews that there never was an attorney named Clay Bertrand."

There was some reason for that. Of all the testimony in the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission report, Andrews' is among the most bizarre. In the wild argot of a Bourbon street bopster, Andrews told the Commission an incoherent story about Bertrand "bugging" him.

'Swinging Cat'

He said that Bertrand had called him in the hospital on behalf of Oswald, while he was still "squirrely" from a bout with pneumonia; that Bertrand was a "bisexual," a "swinging cat" whom he had gone "spooking" for at a "little freaky joint" in New Orleans.

"I would have beat him with a chain if I had caught him," Andrews told the Commission, but Bertrand eluded him.

He did not, however, elude Garrison. Last week, one of Garrison's investigators, Louis Ivon, identified Andrews' man Clay Bertrand as none other than Clay Shaw.